



Complaint Handling Policy

Policy Statement

The Township of Faraday (“Township”) is committed to providing a consistent and uniform process to respond to complaints received from members of the public regarding programs, facilities, Township services, staff or operational procedures and by-law complaints. This policy will govern the handling, processing, investigation, and resolution of by-law complaints and provincial statutes, which the Township is responsible for enforcing.

Purpose

The Township of Faraday recognizes the importance of public feedback and welcomes complaints as a valuable form of feedback regarding our services, operations, facilities and by-laws. The information gained from complaints helps improve the quality of the services provided by the Township and the client experience of residents. The Township wants to ensure a standardized, thorough, prompt and courteous receipt, processing, investigation and resolution of municipal by-law complaints.

Application

This policy **applies to**:

- Township Employees
- Township programs, facilities, or services
- Township By-Laws

This policy **does not** apply to:

The Township’s Elected Officials

Council appointed Boards/Committees

This policy applies to complaints that are received at a service/reception desk, by email, by mail or by fax.

This policy **does not** apply to:

- Requests for service
- Feedback
- Compliments
- Inquiries
- Anonymous complaints
- Request for accommodations

These communications and requests are handled through other mechanisms and processes.

Who can make a complaint?

Anyone who uses or is affected by Township services can make a complaint. This includes:

- residents or property owners
- people who work in or visit the Township
- local businesses
- community groups

Handling of Complaints:

- The Township will deal with all complaints promptly, courteously, impartially and professionally. All complaints will be treated with respect and will not receive adverse treatment or any form of reprisal.
- All complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and other applicable legislation. The identity of the complainant will be made known only to those who need to know in order to consider the complaint. All participants in the complaints process shall keep the details of the complaint confidential except as may be

required by law. It may be necessary to release the complainant's name and contact information during the resolution process.

- Complaints received by one department are to be limited to that specific department unless the complaint involves more than one department. Generally, Department A will not be able to view complaints received by Department B unless operationally required to address the complaint.

Procedure

Complaints shall be submitted to the Clerk's Department or designate. All information must be completed in writing and include information such as:

- Details of what happened or the nature of the by-law violation.
- Where the event happened. Is it within the Township's area of responsibility?
- When the event happened
- Who was involved?
- What was said or done?
- Contact details of the complainant

Complaints may be submitted by:

Mail – Township of Faraday

Attn: Clerk
29860 Highway 28
Bancroft, ON K0L 1C0

Email – office@faraday.ca

Subject Line: Complaint

Fax - (613)332-3006

Attn: Clerk

In-Person – By an appointment with the Clerk.

Phone (613) 332-3638

Complaints Regarding Township Employees, Services, Facilities, or Programs

- The Municipality shall only respond to complaints received from a complainant who provides their full name, address, telephone number and nature of the complaint in writing. Anonymous and/or incomplete complaints shall not be investigated.
- Complainants cannot seek a remedy by contacting Council member(s). If contacted with a complaint, the Council member shall direct the complainant to provide a written complaint as set out in this policy.
- The Clerk shall log the complaint, date-stamp, and forward a copy to the Department Head (or designate) for review.
- Within three (3) business days of receipt of the complaint, the Department Head shall acknowledge the complaint by providing the complainant with an “Acknowledgement of Complaint” letter indicating that a response to the complaint shall be forwarded within thirty (30) calendar days. The Department Head shall also provide the Clerk with a copy of the “Acknowledgement of Complaint” letter.
- The Department Head shall review the issues identified by the complainant and in doing so may:
 - Review relevant municipal and provincial legislation
 - Review the Township’s relevant policies and procedures
 - Review any existing file documents
 - Interview employees or members of the public involved in the issue
 - Identify actions that may be taken to address the complaint or improve municipal operations
 - The Department Head may, at their discretion, notify Council of an open complaint investigation for information purposes.
- Within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of a complaint, the Department Head shall provide a response in writing to the complainant and provide a copy to the Clerk.

- The response shall include:
 - Whether the complaint was substantiated
 - If the complaint is not substantiated, provide reason(s) for their decision; and
 - Any actions the Township has or will take as a result of the complaint.
- If the Department Head is unable to provide a response within thirty (30) calendar days, they shall notify the complainant of the delay and provide an estimate of when a response will be provided.
- The Department Head shall file a copy of the complaint, supporting documentation, and decision, with the Clerk. The Clerk shall maintain a file of the complaint in accordance with the Township's Record's Retention By-law. If a Township employee was the subject of the complaint, a copy of the record shall be retained in their personnel file.

Complaints Regarding By-law Violations-Investigation and Enforcement

- The Municipality shall only respond to complaints received from a complainant who provides their full name, address, telephone number and nature of the complaint in writing. Anonymous and/or incomplete complaints shall not be investigated.
- Complainants cannot seek a remedy by contacting Council member(s). If contacted with a complaint, the Council member shall direct the complainant to provide a written complaint as set out in this policy.
- The Township shall generally operate on a reactive complaint-based process for by-law enforcement services, except for a violation that is an immediate threat to health or safety.
- The name and any personal information provided by the complainant shall remain in the strictest confidence in accordance with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and shall not be intentionally divulged to any member of Council, non-essential municipal staff, the public or media unless so ordered by a Court or other tribunal or body of competent jurisdiction.

- The Township will provide an Acknowledgment of Complaint to the Complainant and forward the complaint to the appropriate department within three (3) business days of receiving the written complaint.
- The By-Law Enforcement Officer may conduct a preliminary review of the complaint to verify the information provide and research any supporting documentation which may be available in municipal records.
- The By-law Enforcement Officer may call the complainant, when necessary, for further details or to confirm or clarify information provided within the formal complaint.
- The By-law Enforcement Officer may attend the site to investigate the activity to determine if a municipal by-law contravention exists.
- If the By-law Enforcement Officer is unclear of a possible contravention, they may seek the advice of the appropriate municipal staff member and may provide the information required to the appropriate party so that an informed determination can be provided and where necessary the appropriate actions initiated.
- Where a violation of a municipal by-law is determined by the By-law Enforcement Officer, excluding documented, chronic violations or where otherwise warranted, the By-law Enforcement Officer may provide an initial warning to the person by any of the following four (4) methods:
 - a) In Person;
 - b) By telephone;
 - c) Email; or
 - d) In writing.
- The By-law Enforcement Officer may, upon confirmation of the existence of a violation, issue a Provincial Offence Notice or a Monetary Penalty Notice.
- Where provided for by municipal by-law or otherwise the By-law Enforcement Officer may issue an emergency order to remedy a violation in lieu of an initial warning when such a violation poses an immediate threat to health or safety.

- The By-law Enforcement Officer shall provide the Clerk with a report including the action taken and the resolution of the by-law complaint within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving the complaint.

Compliance

Department Heads are responsible for implementation and ongoing compliance with the Complaints Handling Policy.

Monthly reports will be provided to the Clerk from the By-Law Enforcement Officer/or Department Head, indicating the number of complaints received during a specified timeframe, the number of complaints to date, the number of complaints meeting service standards, the number of complaints outstanding, and the number of complaints not meeting service standards.

If upon completion of the complaint process the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution of the complaint, the complainant has the right to appeal their case to an OPEN meeting of Council.

Responsibilities

Employees: All employees are to have knowledge and awareness of the Township's requirement to receive complaints, the process through which a complaint can be made and the service standards that apply to complaints.

Department Heads: Department Heads are responsible for the receipt and response of all complaints according to the service standards set out. Department Heads hold responsibility for departmental compliance to the Complaints Policy.

Monitoring/Contraventions

The Clerk within the Administration Department will monitor compliance with this policy and will follow up with appropriate departments as required.



OFFICE USE ONLY	
COMPLAINT#:	
RECEIVED BY:	DATE:
FORWARDED TO:	DATE:
<input type="radio"/> Acknowledgement Letter Date sent: _____ Staff name: _____	<input type="radio"/> Additional correspondence Date sent: _____ Staff name: _____
ACTION TAKEN	
<input type="radio"/> Final Decision Letter Date: Sent: Staff name:	Copies filed with Clerk <input type="radio"/> Initial complaint <input type="radio"/> Acknowledgement letter <input type="radio"/> Additional correspondence <input type="radio"/> Final Decision letter

Thank you for taking the time to express your concern(s).
 We will provide a response within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving your complaint. If you have any questions about this process, please contact the Municipal Clerk 613-332-3638 or d.switzer@faraday.ca



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COMPLAINT

INSERT DATE

NAME

ADDRESS

Dear Mr./Ms./Mrs. _____

Thank you for taking the time to express your concerns regarding COMPLAINT EXPLANATION. Your written complaint was received by the Township on INSERT DATE COMPLAINT RECEIVED

We will provide a response within thirty (30) calendar day of receiving your complaint.

If you have any questions regarding the process, please do not hesitate to contact myself at

PHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

Or Municipal Clerk at 613-332-3638 or d.switzer@faraday.ca

Yours truly,

NAME

TITLE